

## COLLOQUY

**JEREMY MORSE** rose to **SUSAN THORPE'S** challenge on page 88 of the May issue. He found the 10-letter BRACHYAXIS in Webster's Secondary Education, with a triangular progression of 17: B (2) RA (19) CHY (36) AXIS (53).

**ROSS ECKLER** adds: Here is a ten-letter word triangle with three numerically-identical progressions: F/RA/NCO/PHIL 6/19/32/45, with progression 13 (in Webster's Second). Not easy to find by hand! No doubt a computer could be programmed to find all such examples.

**JAMES PUDER** notes: In Mark J. P. Wolf's "Word Worm Maze" in the last issue, the author challenged readers to traverse his letter array in several series of unconnected words of equal length. Another interesting way of traversing his maze is in complete sentences—in the shortest possible single sentence, say, or in several sentences that are semantically unified. The shortest possible traverse from UL to LR in a single coherent and grammatical sentence is, I would guess, 24 letters:

A RINSER, I BEG TO *BUNCH* QUARTZ!

Or, if the sentence is not required to end exactly on the Z, then replacing QUARTZ with FURZE reduces its letter length to either 23 or 22, depending on where one chooses to end the count. As for "scenic route" sentential traverses, here's one that I'd title, "An Ancient Viking Bends the Ear of the Guy on the Next Stool, a Purveyor of Semi-Precious Stones":

ARE NO REAL MEN—*DENSE* MEN!—IN EASE RISEN? "SALESMEN," SIR? BAH! I REMEMBER ME AND TEN *DENSE* MEN IN AN INSANE, RIBALD, *GEM*-LADEN RUSH! FINE MEN IN SHIPS, AT A DEBT WE SPAT! I PITY—AY, I PITY!—A "RARE QUARTZ" ERA!

**SCOT MORRIS** claims that Dr. Irving Joshua Matrix tells him this is a big worry.

2007 – Chinese year of the Chicken – Bird Flu Pandemic devastates parts of Asia.  
2008 – Chinese year of the Horse – Equine Influenza decimates Australian racing.  
2009 – Chinese year of the Pig – Swine Flu Pandemic kills hundreds of pigs/humans around the globe.

Next year. . . .

2010 – Chinese year of the Cock – what could possibly go wrong?

Do you believe in Co-incidence, or do you think things just happen?

**DARRYL FRANCIS** spotted a new seven-letter palindrome CELL-LEC on a van. He checked it out via Google, and it seems to be the name of companies in Swansea (Wales) and Lincoln (England).

**TOM RODGERS** noted the following on Futility Closet at [feedblitz@gmail.com](mailto:feedblitz@gmail.com).

Flash Flood

Write the word RAVINE and advance each letter 13 places through the alphabet, and you'll get RAVINE spelled backward:

RSTUVWXYZABCDE  
ABCDEFGHIJKLMN  
VWXYZABCDEFGHI  
IJKLMNOPQRSTU  
NOPQRSTUVWXYZA  
EFGHIJKLMNOPQR

Three of *Word Ways*' long time contributors have published books: Leonard R. N. Ashley has *Language in Action* by Xlibris (information at [xlibris.com](http://xlibris.com)); Dave Morice's new *Fortune Cookie* is available from the author; and Stephen Kahan's *May I Have A Word With You?* Is available at [skalpha1@aol.com](mailto:skalpha1@aol.com) for \$15.00 plus \$1.95 postage.

We will review all three books in the next issue. The prolific lexicographer Paul Dickson has sent us two of his most recent dictionaries and these will be reviewed too. In October we will receive our copy of the new *Oxford Thesaurus* that has caused so much excitement among puzzlists – it is supposed to be the most comprehensive thesaurus ever printed. We shall see.

Dave Morice has contracted to write an article on his word play for *Games Magazine* but the exact issue it will appear in is not yet available.